

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
an intubation-tube placement device; and
an anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device and having an exploratory portion shaped to prevent the anti-perforation device from perforating an internal body structure during insertion.
2. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said intubation-tube placement device comprises:
a semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube.
3. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:
a cylindrically-shaped rod or an octagonally-shaped rod.
4. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:
said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material.
5. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:
said anti-perforation device including a light source.

6. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein said anti-perforation device including a light source comprises:

an externalized battery pack.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said intubation-tube placement device forming a hollow tube;

~~said anti-perforation device having further comprising a trailing portion; and an exploratory portion;~~

a channel between the trailing portion and the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device; and

the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device such that the channel substantially aligns with the hollow tube.

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having further comprising a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and~~

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a spheroid or an ellipsoid shape.

9. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a spheroid or an ellipsoid shape comprises:

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having the spheroid or the ellipsoid shape, a portion of which extends beyond the outer diameter of the intubation-tube placement device.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device ~~coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises~~:~~said anti-perforation device having~~ further comprises:

~~a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and device, wherein~~ the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having an angled shape.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device ~~coupled to said intubation-tube placement device~~ further comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and device, wherein~~ the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a blunted shape, a portion of which extends beyond the outer diameter of the intubation-tube placement device.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device ~~coupled to said intubation-tube placement device~~ further comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and device, wherein~~ the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation is formed from a malleable material.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device ~~coupled to said intubation-tube placement device~~ further comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and device, wherein~~ the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a surface forming an oblique angle with an axis of said intubation-tube placement device.

14. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said anti-perforation device proximate to a tactile-accentuator flap.

15. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, comprising:
an intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device.
16. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein said intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:
said intubation-tube placement device internal to said intubation tube; and
a retaining device in contact with said intubation tube.
17. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 16, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:
a rubber stopper inserted into said intubation tube; and
said rubber stopper having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to said rubber-stopper hole.
18. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 16, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:
an intubation-placement-device guide integral with said intubation tube;
and
said intubation-placement-device guide having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to the intubation-placement-device-guide hole.
19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
an intubation-tube placement device; and
at least one tactile-accentuator flap coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and

an anti-perforation device coupled to the intubation-tube placement device
and having an exploratory portion shaped to prevent the anti-perforation device from perforating
an internal body structure during insertion.

20. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19, wherein said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

a semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube.

21. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 20, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

a cylindrically-shaped rod or an octagonally-shaped rod.

22. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 20, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material.

23. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19, wherein said at least one tactile-accentuator flap coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said at least one tactile-accentuator flap forming a non-zero angle with an axis of said intubation-tube placement device.

24. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 23, wherein said at least one tactile-accentuator flap forming a non-zero angle with an axis of said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

a semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material.

25. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 24, wherein said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material comprises:

said semi-rigid structure having a 1 mm by 1 mm facial profile.

26. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 24, wherein said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material comprises:

said semi-rigid structure affixed to a ~~ring-like~~ structure —encompassing said intubation-tube placement device.

27. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19, wherein said at least one tactile-accentuator flap coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said at least one tactile-accentuator flap proximate to an anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device.

28. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 27, wherein said at least one tactile-accentuator flap proximate to an anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said at least one tactile-accentuator flap coupled to the anti-perforation device.

29. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19, comprising:

an intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device.

30. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 29, wherein said intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said intubation-tube placement device internal to said intubation tube; and a retaining device in contact with said intubation tube.

31. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 30, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:

a rubber stopper inserted into said intubation tube; and

said rubber stopper having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to the rubber-stopper hole.

32. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 30, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:

an intubation-placement-device guide integral with said intubation tube; and

said intubation-placement-device guide having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to the intubation-placement-device-guide hole.

33. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

an intubation-tube placement device comprising an anti-peroration device having an exploratory portion shaped to prevent the anti-perforation device from perforating an internal body structure during insertion; and

an intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device.

34. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

a semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube.

35. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

said semi-rigid structure having a cross section appropriate to either a human adult, or a human child, or a neonatal human infant.

36. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

said semi-rigid structure having a cross section appropriate to either a non-human adult animal, or a non-human child animal, or a neonatal non-human infant animal.

37. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

a cylindrically-shaped rod or an octagonally-shaped rod.

38. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material.

39. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said semi-rigid structure having a cross section smaller than a cross section of an intubation tube comprises:

said semi-rigid structure formed from a malleable material.

40. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said intubation-tube placement device internal to the intubation tube; and
a retaining device in contact with said intubation tube.

41. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 40, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:

a rubber stopper inserted into said intubation tube; and

said rubber stopper having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to the rubber-stopper hole.

42. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 40, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:

an intubation-placement-device guide integral with said intubation tube;
and

said intubation-placement-device guide having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to the intubation-placement-device-guide hole.

43. (Cancelled)

44. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said anti-perforation device including a light source.

45. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said intubation-tube placement device forming a hollow tube.

46. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said intubation-tube placement device forming a hollow tube;

said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion;

a channel between the trailing portion and the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device; and

the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device such that the channel substantially aligns with the hollow tube.

47. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a spheroid or an ellipsoid shape.

48. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 47, wherein the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a spheroid or an ellipsoid shape comprises:

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having the spheroid or the ellipsoid shape, a portion of which extends beyond the outer diameter of the intubation-tube placement device.

49. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and~~

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having an angled shape.

50. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and~~

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a blunted shape, a portion of which extends beyond the outer diameter of the intubation-tube placement device.

51. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and~~

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device formed from a malleable material.

52. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 43, 33 wherein said anti-perforation device coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

~~said anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion, the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device; and~~

the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device having a surface forming an oblique angle with an axis of said intubation-tube placement device.

53. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

at least one tactile-accentuator flap coupled to said intubation-tube placement device.

54. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 53, wherein said at least one tactile-accentuator flap coupled to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said at least one tactile-accentuator flap forming a non-zero angle with an axis of said intubation-tube placement device.

55. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 54, wherein said at least one tactile-accentuator flap forming a non-zero angle with an axis of said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

a semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material.

56. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 55, wherein said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material comprises:

said semi-rigid structure having a 1 mm by 1 mm facial profile.

57. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of Claim 55, wherein said semi-rigid structure formed from a medical-grade polymeric material comprises:

said semi-rigid structure affixed to a ~~ring-like~~ structure encompassing said intubation-tube placement device.

58. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 33, wherein the apparatus is enclosed in sterile packaging.

59. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

the intubation tube having a rounded tip or a tapered tip.

60. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

the intubation tube having a vented tip.

61. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

an intubation-tube placement device comprising an anti-perforation device having an exploratory portion shaped to prevent the anti-perforation device from perforating an internal body structure during insertion; and

a handle affixed to said intubation-tube placement device.

62. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 61, wherein said handle affixed to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

an intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device.

63. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 62, wherein said intubation tube secured to said intubation-tube placement device comprises:

said intubation-tube placement device internal to said intubation tube; and

a retaining device in contact with said intubation tube.

64. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 63, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:

a rubber stopper inserted into said intubation tube; and
said rubber stopper having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to said rubber-stopper hole.

65. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 63, wherein said retaining device in contact with said intubation tube comprises:

an intubation-placement-device guide integral with said intubation tube;
and

said intubation-placement-device guide having a hole, said intubation-tube placement device internal to the intubation-placement-device-guide hole.

66. (Currently Amended) An method comprising:

inserting an intubation-tube placement device, secured to an intubation tube, into a patient's oral cavity;

detecting the cartilaginous rings of the trachea via at least one tactile-accentuator device coupled to the intubation-tube placement device;

forcing the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords; and

axially sliding the intubation tube along the intubation-tube placement device such that the intubation tube follows the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords.

67. (Original) The method of Claim 66, wherein said intubation-tube placement device comprises a light source.

68. (Original) The method of Claim 66, wherein said forcing the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords comprises:

suctioning materials from a vicinity of the patient's vocal cords via a suction tube formed by the intubation-tube placement device.

69. (Original) The method of Claim 68, wherein the suction tube formed by the intubation-tube placement device comprises:

the intubation-tube placement device forming a hollow tube.

70. (Original) The method of Claim 68, wherein the suction tube formed by the intubation tube placement device comprises:

the intubation-tube placement device forming a hollow tube;

an anti-perforation device having a trailing portion and an exploratory portion;

a channel between the trailing portion and the exploratory portion of said anti-perforation device; and

the trailing portion coupled to said intubation-tube placement device such that the channel substantially aligns with the hollow tube.

71. (Original) The method of Claim 66, wherein said forcing the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords comprises:

applying axial pressure along the intubation-tube placement device such that the intubation-tube placement device moves into the patient's trachea.

72. (Canceled)

73. (New) An method comprising:

inserting an intubation-tube placement device having an exploratory portion shaped to prevent the intubation-tube placement device from perforating an internal body structure during insertion, into a patient's oral cavity;

forcing the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords; and

axially sliding an intubation tube along the intubation-tube placement device such that the intubation tube follows the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords.

74. (New) The method of Claim 73 wherein said intubation-tube placement device comprises a light source.

75. (New) The method of Claim 73 wherein said forcing the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords comprises:

suctioning materials from a vicinity of the patient's vocal cords via a suction tube formed by the intubation-tube placement device.

76. (New) The method of Claim 75 wherein the suction tube formed by the intubation-tube placement device comprises a hollow tube.

77. (New) The method of Claim 76 wherein the intubation-tube placement device comprises:

a trailing portion; and

a channel between the trailing portion and the exploratory portion, wherein the channel substantially aligns with the hollow tube.

78. (New) The method of Claim 73, wherein said forcing the intubation-tube placement device through the patient's vocal cords comprises:

applying axial pressure along the intubation-tube placement device such that the intubation-tube placement device moves into the patient's trachea.

79. (New) The method of claim 73, further comprising:
detecting the cartilaginous rings of the trachea via at least one tactile-accentuator device coupled to the intubation-tube placement device;